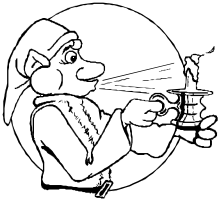


Christmas Safety Tips

Winter holidays and candles go together. They symbolize joy, warmth, security and light. If you use candles or other open flame in your household decorations, remember these safety tips:



- Keep flames well away from anything that will burn - upholstered furniture, curtains, lampshades and flammable holiday decorations.
- Never leave a flame unattended, even for a moment, and keep children and pets away from all fires.
- If a candle is used in an arrangement with greens, be sure it is in a stable glass enclosure. Keep the greenery moist and discard as soon as it begins to dry.

Christmas trees are the most prevalent and the most beautiful of all decorations. Whether you have a cut tree or a living (container) tree, keep it well watered.

- No matter how charming the tradition, never use live candles on or near the tree.
- Place tree away from sources of heat.
- Underwriters Laboratories should approve Christmas lights as shown by the UL tag on the cord. Never use strings of lights that have frayed or broken cords.
- Do not leave lights on unattended.
- Do not overload electric outlets or overuse extension cords. Demanding too much current from your circuits can make wiring overheat and start fires inside your walls.
- Purchase only living trees with root balls or freshly cut trees. Some cut trees were harvested months earlier and are dangerously dry by the time you shop for your tree. Test Freshness by closing your thumb and forefinger around a branch and pulling toward the branch tip. The needles should feel soft and springy, and very few should drop to the ground. When you get the tree home, cut about an inch off the bottom of the trunk at a 45-degree angle and place the tree in water. The cutting step is important because a cut tree tries to "heal" its cut by sealing it with its own sap, which prevents the tree from drinking.
- Use a stand that holds plenty of water so the tree will not dry out. A tree can become a flaming torch in a few seconds with a fire so hot that it can engulf an entire room in less than two minutes.
- When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly.



